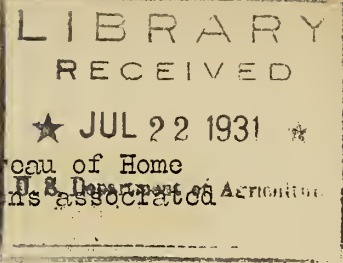


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H 755-B
HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR



A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 42 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, July 2, 1931.

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How do you do Homemakers!

I know that many of you have found out before now that both of my promises of last week were good ones. The attractive leaflet telling how to make summer covers for your furniture came from the press the end of the week. By the way your letters have been pouring in for a copy of Leaflet 76 "Slip Covers", and also for the little green recipe book "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes Revised", I can tell that there were plenty of homemakers listening to the Farm and Home Hour last Thursday. If you happened not to be one of them, there is still plenty of time for you to write for these free pamphlets.

I wonder what you are planning to do with your family this week end to celebrate National Independence Day. Will you have a picnic, go for a visit or a trip, have a quiet time at home, attend some patriotic celebration, or what? If you ask a good many people about their plans, you are likely to be surprised to find how many of them think of the Fourth as just a time to be noisy and daring. Most of us set out to celebrate without stopping to recall what the big celebration is about. We are out for excitement and a change, and we are passing this feeling on to our children to such an extent that they remember even less than we what history records for July 4, 1776. I have heard the most reserved, quiet and dignified of middle aged and elderly people say with apparent regret that the Fourth of July isn't a big day of rejoicing any more, that it is "so tame nowadays."

It may seem tame but accident figures on record classify it as a very wild time. I know you must have heard before now that more Americans have lost their lives celebrating the fact that the Declaration of Independence was signed than were killed in our struggle for national liberty during the Revolutionary War. And loss of life is the smallest figure in the list of accidents. Each year shows from two to three times as many injuries as fatalities.

An injury that seems minor at the time may have a serious result later. Small explosions may cause small burns that become infected and result in lockjaw later. Accident records for holiday celebrations include drowning and automobile accidents too, and there are many serious nervous shocks that are never found in the figures.

And so, in spite of what many cautious parents, many far sighted communities, and such organizations as the National Safety Council, the American Medical Association and insurance companies are doing to prevent dangerous celebrations on Independence Day, they still exist. And they aren't confined to that day alone. Even in communities where the sale of

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fireworks is restricted, noisy and treacherous explosives are sold days and weeks ahead of July Fourth.

That reminds me of something I was told the other day, something that has already happened in connection with this year's celebration. Some boys in their early teens were out one night recently playing some Fourth of July jokes in a town that prohibits the sale and use of explosives. These boys had secured some very noisy cannon crackers, which they discharged under the windows of persons they wanted to frighten, just for fun, of course. Whether they thought it would be especially funny to frighten a very feeble old lady, or whether they chose a sport under her window quite by accident, I am not sure. At any rate two very loud reports fired in rapid succession startled an entire neighborhood and disturbed the heart action of this elderly woman so seriously that a physician had to spend a number of hours at her bedside to save her life. If she hadn't recovered from the shock, would those thoughtless boys have been responsible or to blame? Certainly they had no intention of harming anyone, and they really didn't themselves originate this idea of noisy reports to commemorate Independence Day. Neither did they make the fireworks. I can't help feeling that the responsibility for accidents, fatal or minor, lies with someone else than the children who are many times directly connected with them. We as parents ought to prevent children from having even the simplest of explosives, or from playing around where others are discharging them. And as good citizens we should see that community regulations restrict the sale and the private display of fireworks. The money spent in caring for the injured and the money lost by property damage would make a tremendous public demonstration in any community.